

MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE FIRE ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

October 2002

OFFICE OF THE FIRE ADMINISTRATOR

Commission Office

The following items were discussed at the October 10, 2002 meeting of the Fire and Rescue Commission:

- Robert Kendal, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, provided an overview of the fiscal conditions facing Montgomery County. For FY 04, there is a projected deficit \$230-250 million of expenditures over revenues. Public safety will continue to be a priority in the budget, but cuts should be anticipated to meet the gap between projected revenues and expenditures. Mr. Kendall was recognized by Chairman Aoyagi for his years of service to the County. He will be retiring at the end of November.
- The Commission discussed a request for information regarding the office configuration of staff assigned to the 12th floor. Chair Aoyagi advised that the matter was a low priority compared to other work assignments.
- Chair Aoyagi reported on the following:
 - The forum regarding the DOL “two hatter” issue went well, and revisions to the Executive Regulation that will change the restrictions on how “two hatters” can volunteer with a LFRD will be transmitted to the County Executive soon.
 - A memo summarizing the Planning Convocation held on September 28, 2002 was shared with the Commission.
 - The Medical Review Committee (MRC) has been appointed, and will be reviewing the draft plan for EMS quality assurance.
- The request from the Gaithersburg-Washington Grove FD to upgrade Ambulance 87 and Ambulance 289 to ALS units was approved with the understanding that additional career staffing will not be provided for these units unless compelling operational needs exist.
- The Burtonsville VFD was approved to add two support vehicles to the fleet with the understanding that all costs to operate these vehicles be funded with nontax funds.
- Requests were approved to dispose of a sedan (Germantown VFD) and an engine (Damascus VFD).
- A request from the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad to make the pilot ALS chase car program operating from Friendship Heights a permanent program was approved.
- A resolution was adopted to mandate *PS2000* Communications training for all MCFRS personnel certified in the IECS.
- The *PSTA Student* policy was adopted by resolution.

Research and Planning

Emergency Management

National Awards – Kathleen Henning attended the 50th Anniversary national conference of the International Association of Emergency Managers in October to receive several awards on behalf of the county. Montgomery County was awarded a First Place National Media Award for the Public Health & Emergency Preparedness brochure. MCFRS received a First Place National Media Award for computer products for their website mcfrrs.org (incorporating Emergency Management and all hazards messages).

We were given a Third Place National Media Award for OEM's *Disaster Blaster* newsletter. In addition to the three County awards, Kathleen Henning was given an IAEM certificate for efforts in support of national emergency management programs, including her service on the Home Safety Council, as a representative to the RAND Office of Homeland Security Work Group, as a representative on the FEMA Readiness, Response & Recovery Capability Task Force, and for her appointment to the IAEM Advisory Council.

COG Leadership – B. Nemchin, K. Henning, and J. Resnick from the Office of the Fire Administrator participated in the two day Council of Governments Senior Leadership Seminar on regional terrorism response in Washington DC. Other agencies representing the county included other MCFRS, MCPS, DPW&T, and staff from the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

Terrorism Preparedness - The Emergency Management Group held the critique of the Bioterrorism 2002 Exercise at Suburban Hospital on October 10th. The EMG conducted an evaluation exercise at the EMG November 13th meeting and prioritized the top lessons learned for further action. Copies of the Evaluation report were forwarded to all Fire and Rescue Chiefs and police stations.

Radiological Exercise – Team C of the EMG Exercise Design Team has been meeting twice monthly in preparation for the February 25th Radiological “dirty bomb” exercise. Plans call for the hazmat team from St. 28, and other fire and rescue units to participate for site one. National Navy Medical Center has offered to provide 50 mock victims for decontamination practice on their property which is site two. State agencies, law enforcement, fire and rescue, and the EMG will all participate in the half day exercise. A hotwash is planned for the afternoon. A critique is planned for two weeks following the exercise, hosted by National Navy Medical Center.

Utility/Transportation – A workshop will be held December 13th for county agencies, representatives from power, water, and gas utilities, and representatives from various transportation systems including Metro, Amtrak, Ride-On, and the Gaithersburg Air Park. Dam operators and owners have been invited for the first time to discuss security measures for water supplies. There will also be a presentation on pipeline security.

DCS - The November Disaster Command System class was postponed due to low registration and rescheduled for January. It will be combined with a two day bio-terrorism exercise, following up on the lessons learned from the September 25th plague EMG exercise. One of the lessons learned from the September exercise was to reduce the compression of exercises to allow more time for decision making and interaction. This class/exercise will allow that.

Communications – Preparations are underway for the annual “Communications in Disaster” seminar. It will be held February 13, 2003 in the evening to accommodate volunteer participation.

1st Responder – K. Henning attended the Bioterrorism 1st Responder Task Force work session on November 13th. OEM has been assigned to look further into issues relating to the animals as sentinels to a bioterrorist attack. Issues under discussion are quarantine, destruction of animals, burial vs. incineration, and role of state versus county officials. OEM is also participating on the quarantine committee (human) to review and script messages for the public on sheltering in place.

NOAA Radios – All public schools were issued one NOAA Emergency and Weather Alert radio this summer. Most of the private schools have been issued radios. OEM and DHHS will work on reviewing the discrepancy between the shorter State authorized list and county maintained list of private schools. (NOAA radios were credited with saving lives when tornado recently hit movie theater in Van Wert Ohio.)

GEMAC/SERC – As a member, K. Henning attended the quarterly Governor’s Emergency Management Advisory Council/State Emergency Response Commission Executive Committee on November 14th. Hazardous materials planning grants were approved statewide, including both a training and planning grant for Montgomery County. An annual report is being drafted which is expected to go to the Governor-elect. Among discussions were the need for new or reappointments by Governor to statewide committees.

Community Education Safety Section

Corporate Development Services

Automation Section

Fleet and Facilities Section

Grants Management Section

Property Section

DIVISION OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

Bureau of Operations

Administration

Safety

Specialty Teams

Collapse Rescue/Urban Search and Rescue

Swiftwater Rescue Team

October was the first full month of combined operations for river rescue and dive team personnel. The River Rescue Strike teams responded to six incidents; the newly assigned divers also responded to a call for service.

The divers are now undergoing training to become qualified boat crew, and a training program is under development to train boat personnel to assist the divers as boat tenders.

Bureau of Program Support Services

Administration

Communications

October 2002

Total Telephone Calls Received:	90216
Total 9-1-1 Calls Received:	64546
Total Admin Calls Received:	13239

- ECC personnel would like to welcome District Chief Steve Lohr as the new Communications

Officer. We look forward to working with him.

- Communications personnel have been busy completing just in time training for PS-2000 cutover. Classes have been conducted to certify full time and cross-trained staff in Altaris CAD, Vesta Phone, and Centracom Radio Console.
- A CAD training console is being installed on the third floor of the existing ECC to facilitate hands on usage.
- MFF Brian Jefferson has been detailed to the new center at 1300 Quince Orchard Blvd. to assist TRW and other contractors with troubleshooting the Altaris CAD system/software.
- Work continues to proceed to fully equip the new facility in preparation of cutover.
- Staff continues to work with and support the other county agencies who will be sharing the facility at 1300 Quince Orchard Blvd.
- Staff has met with FRC committee members to review comments regarding the communications manual revision and the proposed splitting of the document into a Field Users Guide and an Internal Operations Manual that will parallel cutover to the new PS-2000 radio system.
- FY-04 Budget requests and program measures are being prepared for the Fire Administrator.
- Chief Lohr has met with all four shifts as part of an orientation as the new Communications Officer.
- Congratulations to John and Tracy Lewis on the birth of their son, Brandon, on October 10, 2002.

Training

Exams completed for Emergency Vehicle Driver Testing in October are:

Written	7
Practical	10

One volunteer EMT-Paramedic was awarded charge status in October.

Recruit Class #22 which began September 3, 2002 continues with 34 recruits. The class has completed EMT-B Basic class and began Essentials of Firefighting during October.

The first "EMT-Intermediate" (EMT-I) class began with the Anatomy and Physiology portion of the class on October 15th with 17 students.

Bureau of Life Safety Services

Administration

Held the 3rd Annual Decon/WMD Symposium on October 24-25, 2002. We had over 300 people pre-registered and about 315 attended.

Fire Code Enforcement

Fire and Explosive Investigation

In October, Fire and Explosive Investigators investigated 6 accidental fires and 15 criminal fire related incidents. The Bomb Squad responded to a total of 33 explosive / suspicious package / letter, threat incidents. The total estimated dollar loss for accidental fires was \$ 1,105,500 and \$ 151,950 for criminal fire related incidents.

The section assisted the sniper task force in evaluating tip mail and examinations of recovered evidence.

The section participated in two exercises this month one table top at the Department of Energy and the Red Dawn Metro Exercise.

Support Unit 91 and bomb technicians participated in open houses at station 7 and 11.

DIVISION OF VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

- Attended PS 2000 training
- Attended a reorganization meeting with the Fire Administrator
- Participated in a quarterly meeting with the Chief, MCPD and his top officers
- Went before the Council's PSC regarding LOSAP
- Attended a Chamber of Commerce Awards Committee meeting
- Participated in the Annual Volunteer Awards Ceremony
- Attended a critique at Suburban Hospital regarding the bioterrorism exercise
- Met with Council staff regarding the EMBRS situation
- Attended funeral services for Betty Ann Kranke
- Attended a meeting at Sta. 15 with Chief Strock, Chief Baker, DC Emmons, Capt. Tippet and Fred Welsh regarding basement firefighting policies
- Attended the MD Metro Chiefs conference at MIEMSS
- Attended the Annual MCVFRA conference
- Participated in the Metro Disaster Drill
- Attended the Decon Seminar at the UMSG – Dept. Chief Jarboe's project
- Attended a two day conference at the Hyatt, Wash., D.C., regarding Regional Leaders and area wide emergency events
- Conducted an informal budget meeting regarding the Pollution Prevention Program
- Attended a Safety Committee meeting
- Attended the Fire Board, Human Relations, Safety and Training, Chiefs Advisory and Operations Committee meetings and the Fire and Rescue Commission and Fire and Rescue Association meetings
- Mediated personal, personnel and/or sensitive issues with various LFRDs, etc.

